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25. A NEW SPECIES OF *EPICROSEJUS* BERLESE (ACARINA: EPICROSEJIDAE) FROM SITALA IN WEST BENGAL

(With two plates containing ten figures)

The genus *epicrosejus* Berlese is, at present, represented by five species: *angelioides* Berlese (1904) from Java, *E. seioides* Berlese (1910) from Java, Tahiti (Berlese 1918), Marquesas Islands (Vitzthum 1935), *E. scutatus* Berlese (1923) from Sumatra; *E. zimmermani* Trägårdh (1953) from Mangareva Islands, *E. porosus* Domrow (1956) from Green Ant Islands. The species, described below from India, is the second record of the genus from the Indian Sub-Region.

Epicrosejus abinashi sp. nov.

Female. The dorsum (length 0.684 mm.; width 0.540-0.558 mm.) is partly covered by the anterior, median, and posterior shields. All dorsal setae are pilose. The anterior dorsal shield is triangular, a little wider than long, and bears about thirty-one pairs of setae. The anterior shield is surrounded by inter-scutal membrane except at the anterior end (Plate I, Fig. 1). The median dorsal shield is somewhat rectangular in shape and bears twelve pairs of setae (omitting the setae on the 'cuneiform areas'). The anterior and posterior 'cuneiform areas' are provided with five and two setae each, respectively. The median shield is entirely surrounded by inter-scutal membrane. The posterior dorsal shield consists of two shields with a median longitudinal groove bearing no setae, which is continuous with a similar ventral strip behind the anus. Each of the two posterior shields bears ten to eleven setae. The

posterior shield does not extend to the margin of the body except at the posterior edge.

The tritosternum has a basal part and a pair of pilose laciniae. It is flanked by variable number of processes. The most distinctive feature of the intercoxal region is shown in Plate I, Figure 2. The ventri-anal shield is large and provided with a number of setae. The postero-lateral margin of the ventri-anal shield carries two pairs of projections, the median pair much shorter than the lateral pair. Each lateral projection terminally bears a very long seta, 0.224-0.230 mm. in length; the remainder of the chaetotaxy of this projection is composed of short setae as arranged in the figure. Each median projection carries a seta, 0.144-0.154 mm. in length. Ventrally, the inter-scutal membrane bears about eight pairs of setae, some of which are situated on a distinct sclerite (not shown in the figure). The stigma lies between coxae III and IV; the peritreme extends beyond coxa I. The peritremetal shield is anteriorly coalesced with the dorsal shield whilst its post-stigmatal extension partly encircles coxae IV.

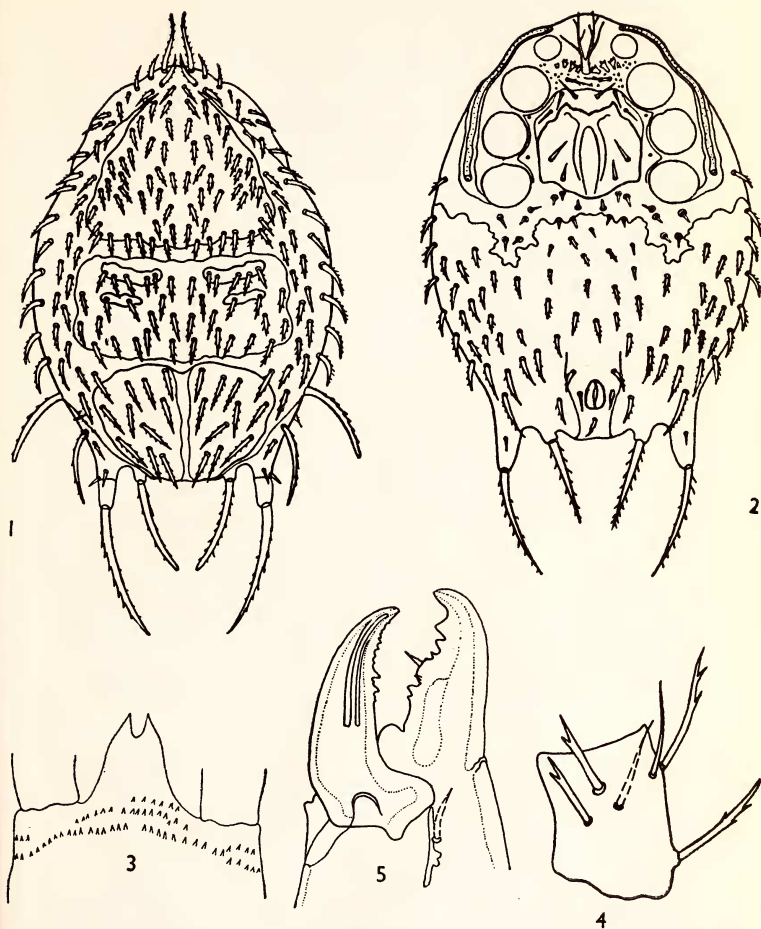
The tectum is two-pronged and provided with numerous small spiniform processes at the base (Plate I, Fig. 3). The trochanter, femur, and genu of the pedipalp (Plate I, Fig. 4) are provided with two, five, and six setae respectively. The apotele of tarsus is two-pronged. The dentition of the chelicera is shown in Plate I, Figure 5. The gnathosoma very characteristically lacks capitular setae and is provided with numerous spiniform processes which are arranged in a pattern as shown in Plate II, Figure 6. The rostral, external posterior, and internal posterior rostral setae are 0.040, 0.036-0.040, and 0.052-0.060 mm. long respectively. Seven rows of deuto-sternal denticles lie on the ventral groove of the gnathosoma.

Tarsus I (c. 0.164 mm. in length) bears terminally a pair of long setae (0.076-0.080 mm.) and lacks an ambulacrum (Plate II, Fig. 7). Tarsi II-IV terminate in relatively long pretarsi provided with pulvilli and claws.

Male. The structures and chaetotaxy of the dorsum (length and width of the slightly distorted specimen have not been measured) are essentially the same as those of the female (Fig. 8).

The venter resembles the female's, excepting the 'sterniti-genital' area. The genital orifice lies between sternal setae I and II, and is covered by a circular disc (Plate II, Fig. 9). The anterior margin of the sterniti-genital shield is ill defined and its posterior end is situated at the level of coxae IV. It bears seven pairs of setae, indicating that it is composed of the sternal, metasternal, and part of the ventral shields. The ventri-anal shield has the same facies as that of the female, and the terminal setae of the median and lateral projections measure 0.142-0.152 and 0.204-0.216 mm. in length, respectively.

The structures of the tectum and the pedipalp are apparently the same



Epicrosejus abinashi sp. nov.

Figs. 1-5. Female : 1. dorsum ; 2. venter ; 3. tectum ; 4. genu of pedipalp ; 5. chelicera